

BOOK REVIEW

Light Changes: Experiences in the Presence of Transforming Light

by Annekatrin Puhle. Guildford, United Kingdom: White Crow Press, 2013. 276 pp. \$17.99. ISBN 978-1908733184.

Author Annekatrin Puhle is a philosopher, health consultant, and psychical researcher in the area of exceptional human experiences. This book is an extensive review of light experiences that have been reported throughout history. In particular, the book focuses on light experiences in which the light described appeared to have a healing potential and a transcendent capacity.

The author has undertaken extensive research into amassing and analyzing a multitude of experiences from many different sources. There is an extensive collection of more than 800 examples gleaned from the literature as well as 51 self-selected, word-of-mouth reports collected by the author. All previously reported cases are taken from what the author considers to be classic and potentially classic texts in the field of psychical research and related fields, as well as from three major journals: the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, *PSI Researcher*, and *Paranormal Review*.

The book begins with an historical consideration of light experiences throughout the ages in scriptures and ancient texts and in folklore, myths, and cultural beliefs. Light experiences have been described in a variety of contexts such as life-threatening events, crisis, depression, as well as featuring prominently in ancient texts. Such experiences have long-lasting, profound, and life-transforming effects on those who report them.

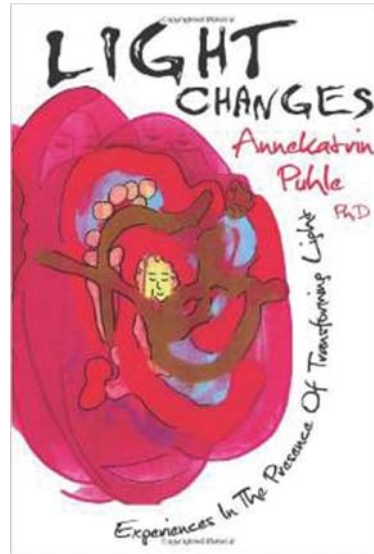
The main body of examples has been categorized according to various factors such as the type of form the light took, the types of situations and contexts in which the light was experienced, the state of mind of the experiencer, as well as the content and interpretation of the experience. Examples cited are from varying scenarios including light experienced during a near-death event, a deathbed vision, at funerals, during an emotional crisis, meditation, lucid dreaming, hypnagogic/hypnopompic states, and even while wide awake.

There is an interesting analysis that considers the frequency of the various aspects reported and the context and state of mind of the experiencers at the time. The analysis is careful and thorough and rather than focusing

on what causes these experiences, the focus is refreshingly on the fact that these experiences do occur, so what is the meaning of them? How can we make sense of these experiences?

The author raises some important points. These light experiences are highly significant and meaningful to those who report them and they raise more questions than they answer. During these experiences, people have attained wise and guiding insights that have a lasting influence in their lives. Furthermore, if the general public remains uneducated about the depths of these experiences, then many people will fail to report them, leading to less material for further research. These are life-enriching experiences that should not be perceived as embarrassing, but rather should be embraced and encouragement given to the experiencers to share them.

This interesting book contains many fascinating examples of light experiences by different people and under different circumstances. It is a wonderful resource for general readers as well as for students of psychical research and religious and spiritual experience. Much hard work has gone into preparing the descriptions, history, and extensive analysis. It is a valuable asset to anyone who is about to embark on their own research in this area and is a valuable addition to the literature.



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